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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

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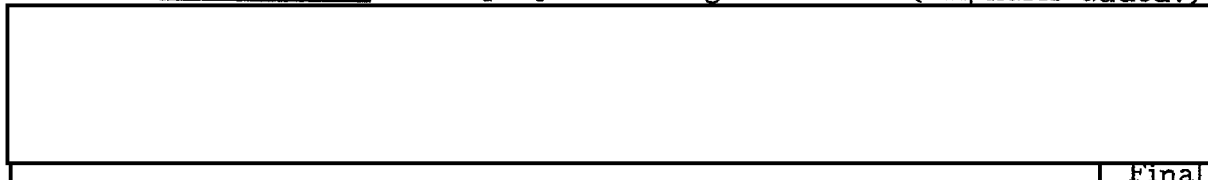
XK 76-6146
30 DEC 1975

Honorable Edward H. Levi
Attorney General
Department of Justice
Washington, D. C. 20530

Dear Mr. Levi:

Former Agency employee Richard S. Welch was murdered in Athens, Greece on 22 December 1975. Mr. Welch was a dedicated employee of this Agency and his demise represents a severe loss to the U. S. Government. In my opinion magazine articles which identified Mr. Welch as an employee of the CIA led directly to his death in Athens. These articles began in November 1974 with John Marks' "How to Spot a Spook," which appeared in The Washington Monthly, in which he explains that the information contained in the State Department's Foreign Service List and Biographic Register can be used to identify CIA personnel. Marks makes the statement: "The time has come to abolish them."

Philip Agee wrote in Counter-Spy (Winter 1975, Volume 2, Issue 2): "The most effective and important systematic efforts to combat CIA that can be undertaken right now are, I think, the identification, exposure, and neutralization of its people working abroad." (Emphasis added.)



Finally, an article appeared in an Athens, Greece newspaper, Athens News, on 25 November 1975 attributed to a "Committee of Greeks and Greek Americans" which described Mr. Welch as Chief of CIA Station in Athens, to which he had moved in July 1975, with his home address where he was shot down.

I ask that the Department of Justice review these articles and determine whether any of the authors of these articles have violated

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any criminal statutes and whether they could be prosecuted under either 18 U.S.C. 241 or 245 of having deprived Mr. Welch of his civil rights.

I have been advised that the United Press International ran a story on 29 December which quoted Doug Porter, staff member of Counter-Spy, as saying the February issue of Counter-Spy would publish the names of CIA agents now in Angola, France and Sweden. I ask that the Department of Justice consider obtaining an injunction to prevent the publication of any names of covert CIA personnel in accordance with the law. This repeated exposure of CIA personnel is subjecting such officers to possible terrorist action. The United States depends on their continued services and their loss would result in grave and irreparable damage to the country.

Attorneys from my General Counsel's office have conducted preliminary discussions with attorneys in the Civil Rights Division and the Civil Division with regard to the specific articles.

Sincerely,

W. E. Colby

W. E. Colby
Director

Enclosures

Above-mentioned articles

cc: Irwin Goldbloom, Deputy Assistant Attorney General
Civil Division/Dept. of Justice

Frank M. Dunbaugh, Deputy Assistant Attorney General
Civil Rights Division/Dept. of Justice

OGC:JKG:WEC:sin (12/30/75)

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